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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000499

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SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY - KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION - KUWAITI AND FORMER
GUANTANAMO DETAINEE ALLEGEDLY BEHIND RECENT MOSUL SUICIDE ATTACK

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Summary

Monday, May 5, 2008

Summary: Kuwaiti citizen and Guantanamo Bay detainee, Abdullah Al-Ajmi, and his friend Naser Al-Dosary, also Kuwaiti, are alleged to have been behind a recent suicide bombing in Mosul, Iraq. Almost all Kuwaiti newspapers have criticized the attacks and extremism in general, with the exception of Al-Watan, which characterized Al-Ajmi as a martyr. According to al-Qabas newspaper, anonymous sources have reported that Al-Ajmi was not psychologically sound due to torture allegedly conducted at Guantanamo Bay. As a reaction to news of the attack, the government of Kuwait announced to the media that the Ministry of Interior is considering the creation of a center to rehabilitate extremists returning to Kuwait from Guantanamo Bay. End summary.

Block Quotes:

-- In an investigative report, the conservative Kuwaiti daily Al-Watan quoted an unidentified cousin of Al-Ajmi (05/03): "it seems he managed to get his passport issued either by sympathy or by bribes. Moreover, as we thank the Government of Kuwait for providing the ex-Guantanamo detainees a decent life, we call upon the Ministry to investigate this matter because whoever helped Abdullah led him to his death."

-- Also in al-Watan, conservative columnist Shamlan Yousef Al-Issa commented (05/04): "What lesson shall we learn from this painful incident...First, we have sleeping terrorist cells and Islamic Jihadist organizations that are working on getting the means to move them abroad...Why are the Jihadists in Kuwait keen to fight the Americans outside and not inside Kuwait? It is obvious that Al-Qaeda refuses to take on the security establishment in Kuwait because, unlike the governments in the Arab region, the Kuwaiti government is sympathetic with extremism. Second, the prison authorities in Guantanamo Bay are very aware that the detainees will resume jihadist activities as soon as they get the chance to do so. This is what happened, and it will absolutely delay the release of the other detainees in the American prison. We need more than a center of rehabilitation. We need a wide study about the reasons behind extremism of school students. We are in need also of knowing why hate has spread between Shiite and Sunni in the public schools."

-- Additionally, in al-Watan, under the headline "Youth's life ... and the Mistaken Jihad," Abdul Rahman Al-Najjar opined (05/04): "It

[this problem] lies in the strict religious thinking and with the "clerks" of destruction who are no more able to differentiate between construction and destruction."

-- In the newly established moderate Kuwaiti daily, Al-Jarida, columnist Mothaffar Abdullah commented (05/04): "...we should not blame only the Ministry of Interior for this matter because the Ministries of Information and Awqaf (Endowments) should also assume their responsibilities. It is not only a question of security, the terrorism and its mobilization of youth should be handled also by the Ministries of Information and Awqaf because they are embarrassing Kuwait in front of the United Nations Security Council and they are affecting our relations with the United States. The detainees should have undergone a program of social, psychological, and religious rehabilitation. What happened to Abdullah Al-Ajmi and Nasser Al-Dousary causes us to ask the Moderation Committee, founded by the Ministry of Awqaf to spread moderate thought, why it has not thought of meeting with these ex-prisoners, especially as Abdullah Al-Ajmi kept on justifying his visits to Pakistan to learn the Shari'a Law? It would have been better if the committee pointed out to him the religious institute in Qortoba [a district of Kuwait City], which is closer than Pakistan."

-- In the newly established moderate Arabic daily, Al-Awan, Mohammad Hussein Al-Yousefi wondered (05/04): "It is not clear in our current situation concerning specifically Abdullah Al-Ajmi, the role of state security in controlling such persons. How was he able to escape and end up in Mosul? This person was an ex-Guantanamo detainee. Whether we agree with the American administration about the legality of the prison, al-Ajmi went to Afghanistan while he was very young, and indeed, he was not there for tourism purposes! We are just asking if it is possible that as soon as authorities pronounced his innocence in Kuwait, if state security stopped monitoring him."

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